

IT WAS TWENTY YEARS AGO TODAY

BRACHY STOMP 61

THAT S&P PEPPER WIPED BRIAN'S SMILE AWAY



JUNE 1987

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Writing this editorial on my 30th birthday I almost
fell for that ancient trick of believing that
because I'm a certain age - "I'm old"!!

I feel we do not grow old because we have lived for
a certain number of years - we grow old if we give
up our ideals, find ourselves unable to be enthusias-
tic, failing to take up a challenge.

10 years ago I was enthusiastic in taking up the
challenge of starting STOMP. The ideals I had at
the time were eventually carried forward by my
friends. The whole venture was a challenge that didn't
take years of planning - it just happened.

Who then would agree that the Beach Boys and their
music are dated? Brian Wilson is a young man. He is
as young as his faith, as young as his self-confidence,
as young as his hope. His youthfulness represents
the victory of courage over cowardice, - the spirit
of adventure.

25 years ago Brian Wilson met his ideals. The Beach
Boys were the end result of that relationship.

Like so many 'end results' it wasn't planned that way
- it just happened!

God Bless Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys.

ANDREW BAINBOROUGH

Back issues still available:
51 to 60 £1.00 each overseas add 50p per copy.

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Reviews

WIPEOUT 4.32 (written by the Surfaris) - The Fat Boys and the Beach Boys from the LP
CRUSHIN. Tin Pan Apple/Polygram 422 831 948-1. Produced by the Latin Rascals (Albert
Cabrera & Tony Moran) in association with the Beach Boys.

An unusual collaboration to say the least, hip hop - rapping group the Fat Boys and the
Beach Boys, but surprisingly the fusion works. There can't be many Beach Boys fans who
are into groups like Run DMC, The Beastie Boys and the Fat Boys so the whole idea of
the Beach Boys and the Fat Boys teaming up seems, at first, preposterous. Mike Love's
contribution with shades of Papa-oom-mow-mow is enormous, with Mike's distinctive bass
vocal interspersed with the Fat Boys rapping verses. The Beach Boys sound youthful and
exuberant on the backing vocals with a short sharp acappella section near the end,
highlighting an unexpectedly enjoyable listening experience.

The Fat Boys tell the story of how after three years touring they take a vacation with
their surf boards to the west coast and end up meeting the real Beach Boys, "so we all
jumped up and started to shout let's all sing a song called "The Wipeout".

Could this be a surprise big hit this summer? Hopefully there will be a 12" with a version
on it without the Fat Boys and just the Beach Boys vocals. At the time of writing there
are no details of a UK release, the track only being available on a US album at present
which, as usual, is available from Record Corner, 27 Bedford Hill, Balham London, for
£9.80 including postage.

MIKE

"WIPE OUT" FEATURING THE BEACH BOYS

831 948-1 V4

FAT CITY, HERE WE COME...

("Wipeout" by the Beach Boys/Fat Boys)

A word to the wise to the traditionalists amongst us - you will HATE this record.
Conversely, should you be into hip-hop, rapping, the Beastie Boys, musical cross-
fertilisation and any form of experimentation, the Beach Boys/Fat Boys collaboration
"Wipeout", should, at the very least, prove of interest.

Personally, I never was into any other forms of surf music beyond the harmony territory,
and even then my tastes seldom ventured beyond the BB, Jan & Dean and the Fantastic
Baggies, thus the original "Wipeout" was so much dross to these ears... but give me
anything with a good drum sound, and I'm yours, which is one (the prime?) reason why,
surprisingly, I like this offering. That it features Brian so much is an unexpected
bonus. It's not, I grant, a disc you'd want to hear every hour, on the hour, but as a
once-in-a-while spin, more than acceptable.

Offhand, I can't think of any recent new BB/affiliated offering that hasn't raised at least
one question (most often the monosyllabic query "why?"), and "Wipeout" conforms, the
principal head-scratcher being, which Boys appear on the song? From purely aural
evidence, I would only be positive about Mike (a solid bass line lifted wholesale from
"Papa-Oom-Mow-Mow") and Brian, who weighs in with a strangely suitably whiny chorus, in
which he could well supply all the vocals. Brucie and Al? Maybe, maybe not. Carl?
Definitely not - when he sings a backing vocal, everyone knows it. It could be him on
the Fender Strat, but, well, it does come over as slightly too competent to be the
chubby one...

This is probably about as contemporary as the Boys are ever going to get, short of
latching onto a currently hot producer who can handle 4½ disparate mega-egos, so enjoy
it for what it is - an amusing day-trip to foreign territory that worked out far better
than I, for one, dared hope... but I'd hate to have to listen to an albums worth of stuff
like this!

AGD

POP REVIEWS

THE BEACH BOYS: Endless Summer (Capitol)

It has been a while since The Beach Boys made any valuable contribution to popular music, but don't let that obscure the simple truth that for twenty years they created some of its most irresistible and enjoyable sounds, and boldly went where no surfers had gone before.

Endless Summer, released as a double vinyl set in 1974, traces their early history from Surfin' Safari in 1962 up to Good Vibrations in November 1966, with 21 songs that veer wildly from the absurd to the immaculate, and occasionally both at once.

To attempt to sum up the contribution to modern music made by Brian Wilson, the Beach Boys leader, in the space available here is close to pointless but, what the heck, I'm willing if you are.

Genius is a word I'd apply to the work of four, maybe five, popular musicians over the last three decades, and Brian Wilson is one of them. He wrote, quite possibly, the most banal lyrics in the history of pop, but his gift for melody, harmony and musical arrangement

has never been surpassed.

Banal as those lyrics were, they perfectly caught the mood of early sixties West Coast American teenage culture. There are songs about hot rods, surf boards, bikinis, sandals... but they add up to a magical diary of a lost era. Even something as trite as Be True To Your School ("just like you would to your girl or guy") makes sense when you realise that the group played hundreds of live gigs in schools and colleges, where such songs must have struck an immediate chord with their audiences.

Brian Wilson's decline, brought about by a combination of unhappy experiences and drug abuses, has been well charted in the pop press but, according to the last reports I heard he is still important in the group, arranging the vocal harmonies to any new Beach Boys songs in half-hour sessions which are as much as he can take before his concentration lapses.

These recordings are clean and beautifully emphasise the perfection that existed in their four and five-part harmony singing even from the earliest days. Essentially, Wilson forged a new pop based on

a combination of Chuck Berry's black rock 'n' roll with the white American barbershop harmony tradition, but he quickly moved into new areas.

His arrangements, even in early hits like Catch A Wave, managed to incorporate such non-pop sounds as harps and barrel organs, and the total absence of bass drum on many tracks is extraordinary, because there's no loss of drive in the songs, which are surprise party dance winners, especially at the end of the evening.

Despite my fondness for the very earliest Beach Boys material, this compilation really takes off for me with the classic 1964 Fun Fun Fun double-guitar intro, and it's only with 1965's Let Him Run Wild, that we move into the era when Wilson began to develop a big production sound in emulation of Phil Spector, with a choogling bass sound, an added warmth to the harmonies, and a Bach-like complexity to the vocal counterpoints.

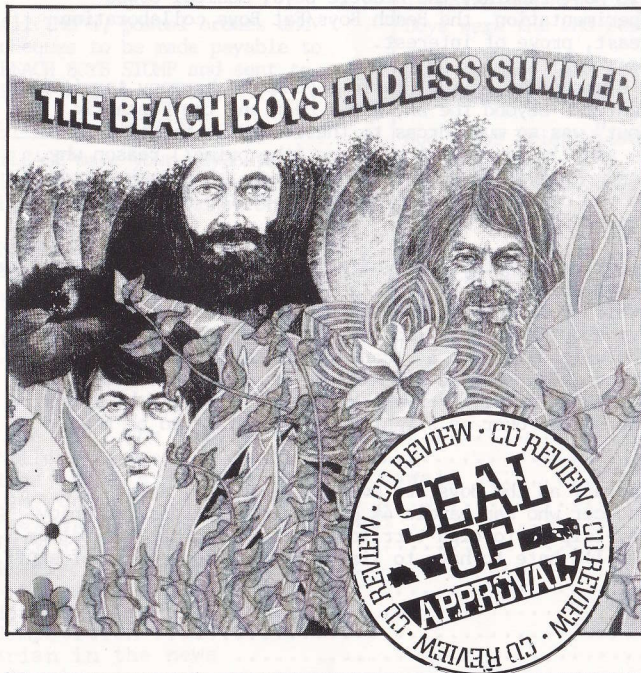
By the time Good Vibrations came out in 1966, Brian Wilson was light-years ahead of the pack, and nobody had heard anything remotely like it. It was like pop music from outer space. There was a widescreen feel to the sound of it, and the arrangement see-sawed from harmony pop to swirling electronic dance rhythms linked by an almost hymn-like middle section. It was joyful, it was cerebral and it was about being young in a time when to be young meant to be innocent and optimistic.

The times may have changed, but the music remains buoyant.

Endless Summer runs to 50 minutes, so there's still room for a definitive Beach Boys compilation on CD. Indeed, there's such an extraordinary wealth of worthwhile material available that the best approach would be the one Virgin took with Tangerine Dream when they made the excellent double compact disc set Dream Sequence whose combined length ran to 2 hours and 13 minutes.

Unfortunately, given the industry's current preference for simply regurgitating old albums in CD guise, we'll probably have to wait some years before a definitive Beach Boys CD compilation hits the shelves. Meanwhile, despite all my carping, this is an excellent disc in every respect, and one which every pop fan ought to own.

J. Black



STILL I DREAM OF IT

It's summer, the weather is great outside, a local radio station just played a block of Beach Boys music and I just recently watched again the Beach Boys 25th Anniversary television special. It's been three months since the special was aired, and six months since I was there in Hawaii for the taping, and watching the special rekindled, no, set ablaze, a host of memories. So I've compiled some notes, as well as one unanswered question: Where were the Sunkist commercials, especially the one with Beach Boys' vocals??

A camera can do things the body just can't; it can be anywhere on stage, it can be overhead, it can see things (like keyboards) from inaccessible angles, and it can get close enough to violate anyone's personal space. As close as I was, front row next to the piano and nearest to Brian, I still appreciate the visual capabilities of the television cameras. Limited perspective was only a boon when it came to the cheerleaders: from my spot, the one cheerleader most visible and the one right nearest Brian was very cute; I, therefore, overestimated the beauty of the others, noting in the special that Bruce's legs were at least as thin as those of a number of the cheerleaders.

A microphone, however, is a mixed blessing: I could enjoy on television some of the verbal exchanges which I missed, but the microphone can be, and was, too analytical of music vocals and can require fixing. In Ray Charles's most enjoyable performance of "Sail On Sailor", the Beach Boys as they performed were of limited presence, serving more as a backup band; the special has added vocals which, in my opinion, overshadow the song as performed. Carl's voice was more strained in his duet with Gloria Loring than evident in person. The Fabulous Thunderbirds performance was much more raw and exciting live, seeming rather tame when viewed in the special. And those present in Hawaii got to hear the full version of "Spirit Of Rock And Roll", as well as other tunes which were covered over by vocal verbiage from Patrick Duffy (never evident to the concert audience, and thought absent due to deaths in his family), Glen Campbell, and John Stamos. It should be noted, however, that most of the onstage talk was as performed, though my wife missed Mike's telling Glen Campbell in the alternate take that Glen had been "somebody", a Beach Boy; and the actual discussion prior to the Everly Brothers' appearance pertained to Mike and Brian's singing in Brian's Nash through the night, and not to the walks home from church with Mike's sister, Maureen.

Even being in Hawaii, however, I still made mistakes. In addition to not borrowing a telephoto lens, I didn't take a tape recorder, I didn't have enough film or a flash for our party with the Beach Boys, and I didn't put my wife on my shoulders to increase our chances of television coverage. It was also hotter being in the sun 4½ hours, and a lot more exhausting being a TV Special participant than I anticipated; in fact, a number of the Sunkist winners left before the taping was completed, showing up redressed and refreshed at the party afterwards. And I still feel a little silly being awed by the Boys, especially 6'4" Brian, bigger than life.

It was an unbelievable dream come true then, and still hard to believe now. And still I dream of it!

RICK SMITH

Dear STOMP

I enclose my list of top ten tracks and thought you'd like to know about a couple of recent video releases featuring the Beach Boys. One titled "Deja View" features the Brian Wilson "Don't Worry Baby" video with others done in a similar style by The Hollies ("Bus Stop") and Box Tops ("The Letter") etc (mostly '60's). The other video is titled "Heat of the '60's", and features The Beach Boys' "You Need A Mess Of Help" at the Brighton Pavilion in 1972. This video has a very odd selection by such artists as Gene Pitney, Lulu, Mary Hopkin, Head Hands & Feet and White Plains (listed as Pentangle). Both videos were seen in the Brighton Virgin store and cost £7.99 and £8.99.

P MOORE

9th BEACH BOYS CONVENTION

Saturday 12th September 1987

Watford Leisure Centre

Doors open 11.00 am

12 noon to 6.00 pm

Vanue The same as in 1986 with the address:- Horseshoe Lane, Garston, Watford, W02 7HH.

Tickets As is now customary tickets at the door but you will need to bring your latest issue of STOMP to gain free entry to the centre. Tickets will be £4.00 per person, children in wheelchairs will be free. Entry after 4.30 pm is £2.00.

Entry As is also now the norm the doors will not open until 11.00 am, only those with tables are allowed access prior to this. For early arrivals there is a cafeteria on the premises. We would like to point out that the Convention is aimed totally at STOMP subscribers, in no way is it intended as a day out for the family. If anybody feels they have a problem with entry would they please contact Mike Grant or Roy Gudge BEFORE the 12th September.

Badges We think we can claim to have got this right last year and as is usual only 200 will be made for the event, so if you fancy a badge be early!

Tables The tables are again 3' by 3' and are £10 each. Anyone wishing to sell anything must have a table. These should be applied and paid for before August 31st as after this they are £15.00 each. Applications should be made to Roy Gudge and please enclose an S.A.E.

Raffle/Videos Much the same as usual and so more information in the next issue.

Location The usual map next issue, the centre is well connected by both road and rail. For those who come by public transport we will give a more detailed guide in issue 62, as Trevor said we were not very good on this point last year. (Roy's fault - and he likes travelling by train.)

Timetable Yet to be finalised.

P.A. There was a big problem with this last year and it was down to us trying to streamline the day even further and it didn't work. (I accept full responsibility for this and have taken steps to borrow the equipment that I have used in the past. Roy G.)

So there it all is, September 12th, Watford Leisure Centre, 12 noon to 6.00 pm. The date for 1988 is September 10th and it could be special.

Address for tables: 33 Frensham Road, Lower Bourne, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 3PY.

ROY GUDGE

Birthday greetings to Brian 45 on the 20th June, and Bruce 45 on the 27th of the same month.

Postbag

Richard Magee's letter in the last issue seems to have stirred up a hornet's nest. His frank and, dare I say, somewhat cynical views have provoked an unprecedented response, rousing even the normally more taciturn of STOMP readers to reply in most scathing terms. His letter was included because he appears to have been a fan of the earlier Beach Boys output and although he has evidently moved on to musical pastures new it was felt that even a non-subscriber had a right to air his views. It was gratifying to have so many leap to the defence of our heroes (including one Graham Wood who didn't leap quite quick enough and whose four page epic arrived too late for inclusion) so apologies to all those whose comments we didn't have room for and to those whose following letters had to be savagely edited to fit them in this issue.

Dear STOMP

Was that letter on page 16 of STOMP 60 serious - it's difficult to believe anyone could be so fatuous and so lacking in self-respect to pen the thing. How anyone who admits to liking Simply Red and Level 42 (for godsake!!!) can have the gall to pronounce judgement on other people's taste is beyond me. According to the 'logic' of Richard Magee anything that hasn't been produced in the last ten seconds (Mel & Kim?) is obviously totally irrelevant. This must undoubtedly apply to Mozart, Shakespeare, Robert Johnson, Dickens and whatever else as well as The Beach Boys.

Seeing that Brian's best music was to come after PET SOUNDS - I rate SMILE higher, and that albums such as LOVE YOU and HOLLAND are easily superior to the surfing stuff (or at least equal) - ah well - you can't argue with an idiot. Richard Magee, whoever you are, you are a fool.

NICK GODFREY

Dear STOMP

Here's my reply to Richard Magee:

Maybe there's some misunderstanding on my part but I'm not deluding myself as you claim. Personally, I feel that the Beach Boys have been neither trend-setters, nor a musical force. However, they are a group of competent musicians, interested in expressing themselves in a dying art form - good music. Not having been honoured with a Grammy or any other large award is inconsequential though how they have been passed up after over 40 top 40 hits (most from the '60s), I couldn't say, but that's an injustice.

The Beach Boys are not a joke in today's musical scene. Certainly the hits come infrequently, but show me a band that has stayed at the top for more than three years.

I have been attending Beach Boys concerts since 1979. I haven't noticed any Zombies in any of the twelve or so performances I've seen. What I've seen is smiling and dancing fans who are reaching out to the past for a sense of security in these uncertain times.

It's obvious that the impetus of the '60s is no longer burning, however, Brian and the others have written some lovely pieces in their released/unreleased catalogue. Maybe we'll never have a new PET SOUNDS or a released SMILE, but their magical harmonies still can sway my ear.

Are the Beach Boys a joke? No, because they are still in demand in the studio and by their public, a public that still believes in them.

KEITH DEVOE

BEACH BOYS



WAVE GOODBYE TO THE COMPETITION!

In July 4th weekend the Beach Boys rule!

Their music has symbolized sun and Fun, Fun, Fun for over 25 years. And now they're gonna Do It Again with the 1987 3-hour Beach Boys 4th of July Radio Special.

The Beach Boys themselves will be there, with the stories behind their biggest hits and a quarter-century musical retrospective that'll knock your sandals off!

In addition to being America's all-time favorite sons of summer, the Beach Boys are hot RIGHT NOW! Millions watched their recent prime-time TV special... leader Brian Wilson has contributed a new song to the hit film "Police Academy 4"... and they're back on the charts with great singles like "Getcha Back," "Rock 'N' Roll To The Rescue" and "California Dreamin'."

On July 4th the Beach Boys will be delivering Good Vibrations and spectacular ratings! The Beach Boys 4th of July Radio Special is available on a swap/exchange basis to stations in the top 170 Arbitron-rated metro markets. To reserve this all-new special for your station call United Stations Programming at 703-276-2900.

For national sales information call United Stations Programming Network at 212-575-6100.

New York Washington, D.C. Chicago Detroit 8 Dallas Los Angeles London



NEARLY A NEW COMPILATION

When I first heard the news the Beach Boys were to visit the UK I thought it would be a good time to approach both Capitol and CBS with regard to releasing something to tie in with the visit.

Capitol Records felt that they put out enough Beach Boys LPs in 1986 and have all the time in the world to re-issue more original albums.

CBS were more interested and thought it a good idea to get a new compilation released in time for the July 19th concert. So it was suggested I send in some ideas I had in mind. The first suggestion was a sort of "Best of" plus "Rarities". It ran like this: SIDE ONE: Lady Lynda (45 edit), It's A Beautiful Day (Long Version), She Believes In Love Again, Good Timin', Forever, Santa Ana Winds and Chasin' The Sky. SIDE TWO: Here Comes The Night (45 edit), It's Gettin' Late, Goin' On, Heaven (45 edit), Male Ego, Where I Belong, Surfs Up. Everyone will have their own choice of tracks but I think there is something for everybody. I left Getcha Back and Come Go With Me off because they were on MADE IN USA and I didn't want to duplicate too many songs from TEN YEARS OF HARMONY.

The second suggestion was a collection of the most 60s/Summer sounding songs recorded since 1970 plus rare non album cuts. SIDE ONE: Palisades Park, Sunshine, California Saga, Disney Girls, Susie Cincinnati, Kona Coast, It's A Beautiful Day (Long). SIDE TWO: Lady Lynda (edit), It's OK, California Calling, Good Timin', Our Sweet Love, Honkin' Down The Highway, Male Ego, Chasin' The Sky.

CBS liked the ideas and an LP was planned to be issued the week of the group's visit. Sleeve design was going ahead and photo selected - also sleeve notes requested from yours truly. All that was needed was permission from the Beach Boys and their management to use selected tracks.

Incidentally CBS did want to use Getcha Back and were thinking of a combination of the two suggested track listings. Anyway everything ground to a halt when CBS called me and said they were very disappointed but they could not get permission to use the tracks as the group now has control over all post 1970 recordings (and possibly the pre 1970 tracks as well from now on). So it seems nothing will be issued in the UK for the group to promote during the fleeting visit to Europe.

Thanks to Karen Meekings at CBS and Tony Wadsworth at EMI for at least showing interest.

MIKE

BEACH BOYS POLL - '79 - '86

Many thanks to all who have sent in poll entries so far. They are still coming in daily and results will be printed in the August STOMP. Closing date is 31st July.

As I write the top six are:

1. Good Timin (more than twice as many votes as the second song)
2. Getcha Back
3. Rock 'n' Roll To The Rescue
4. Lady Lynda
5. Where I Belong
6. Goin' On

Thirty seven different songs have been voted for so far, please keep the votes coming in, you may win first prize - a ride on Brian Wilson's surfboard. Well, maybe an album or a press kit.

MIKE

The other night I heard PET SOUNDS for the first time. "This man has been at the happy juice again," I hear you say. Not so. What I really mean is that I heard it for the first time again.

It has happened at least twice before - once when I first bought the thing twenty one years ago, when on first listening I could barely take in all that was happening, then again some months later when I began to isolate some of the complex musical structures weaving in and out of each other. Through the years I have picked out various bits and pieces that I hadn't fully taken in before but then a week or so ago I was playing the album with cans and volume screwed up just short of the distortion point. I was listening to "I Just Wasn't Made For These Times" and I suddenly heard the bass line - for the first time! You see I had always been aware of it but had never "switched off" the other elements to actually listen to the melody of that line. It is simply superb. What kind of composer writes that kind of line for a bass guitar when everyone is supposed to be listening to the song itself; surely, as long as the bass is plunking away at something then nobody is going to take notice of what the actual notes are. Or are they?

I played the album through again and tried to listen to every track that way, analysing, dissecting, exploring everything that was going on and in a sense rediscovered a record I thought I already knew inside out.

Ask any Beach Boys nut what his favourite LP is and most, if not all, will certainly put PET SOUNDS in the top three. We glibly say to the unconverted or the unaware, "Well of course it was one of the most amazing records ever produced - Brian Wilson was a genius you know," but perhaps we say it merely out of habit with brain and mouth on auto-pilot. Listen again and be rejuvenated.

Carl Wilson regards "Sloop John B" as being the first track recorded for the new album. It may have been intended for the next studio album after SUMMER DAYS (feel-wise it follows on very nicely), but the concept of PET SOUNDS did not gel until a few months after this song had been recorded. Brian was, as usual, being pressured by Capitol to get some product out but being a somewhat lazy individual and no doubt still reeling from the shock of creating something as good as "Sloop", he was far too busy sitting around with friends and smoking dodgy vegetation.

It was at one of these little soirées that he first heard the Beatles' RUBBER SOUL. Well of course the inevitable happened - yes, you guessed it - it blew his mind. He formally announced to Marilyn that he was going to make the greatest rock album in history - and then went ahead and did it.

Mike Love was in Japan touring with the rest of the group so Brian had to look elsewhere for someone to help with the lyrics and bounce ideas around with. Tony Asher, a young songwriter currently engaged at a local advertising agency was secured for this position and, between trying to prise Brian out of bed and dealing with the drug complications, the masterpiece began to take shape. Though most of the words were Tony Asher's they were Brian's feelings, Brian's emotions, Brian's concept. Asher also contributed to the music but a lot actually took shape in the studio. Brian wrote parts for many of the instruments (and a motley assortment they were too) but changes were frequently made on the spot with the musicians themselves writing down what Brian wanted them to play. By all accounts everyone enjoyed this way of working, the musicians respected Brian, and this method certainly produced some revolutionary sounds - the five-piece band was out and the other Beach Boys played barely a note on PET SOUNDS. Brian had been using session musicians for years but never before had the other members of the group had so little to do with the final product. Mike Love did, however, pen the lyrics to "I'm Waiting For The Day" and by all accounts it was he who took exception to the sentiments of "Hang On To Your Ego" which led to the group's road manager, Terry Sachen, coming up with the more acceptable "I Know There's An Answer".

Most of the songs were new, the exceptions being the aforementioned "Sloop John B", "I'm Waiting For The Day", a version of which Brian had written nearly two years previously and the recently recorded "In My Childhood" which was finished but had lyrics he did not like. It seems most likely that, like another famous LP which will be mentioned later, PET SOUNDS was recorded solely on four track machines. This means that, allowing for vocal overdubs and a certain amount of track "bouncing", many instruments would have to share the same track. In the case of "In My Childhood" although only the basic track was retained it happened to contain sundry other noises which could not be separated. These are the bells and honks that appear in the final version of the song which became "You Still Believe In Me."

There is no doubt that by the time the group returned from Japan not only were all the backing tracks just about finished but some whole songs were complete - "Caroline No" was just Brian as was "Don't Talk", "Pet Sounds" (the track) didn't need any vocals and "Let's Go Away For A While" was left without the words that Tony Asher had written for it.

With "Sloop John B" already in the can, that left just eight tracks for the Beach Boys to add vocals to. Without exception each member of the group remembers the recording of those vocals as something of a gruelling experience - Brian was a hard taskmaster and the songs were somewhat alien to them both instrumentally and lyrically. They recall working long into the night to satisfy Brian's quest for perfection - but hang on a mo, let's take a closer look at those eight (and it may even have been only seven) tracks in question. Half of those had backing vocals only in the chorus or bridge, which leaves "Wouldn't It Be Nice", "Here Today" and "I Just Wasn't Made..." with fairly substantial wadges of voices and an eight bar bridge and coda in "God Only Knows" (and that fade out is only a three-part arrangement sung by Brian and Bruce). So what I'm saying is, why all the fuss about these sessions when they had been doing solid backing harmonies just as intricate for many years? Lead vocals were mostly Brian with Mike, Carl and Al popping up here and there but it's also a well-documented fact that even after some of these tortuous sessions Bri went into the studio, wiped off the group's efforts and re-recorded them himself.

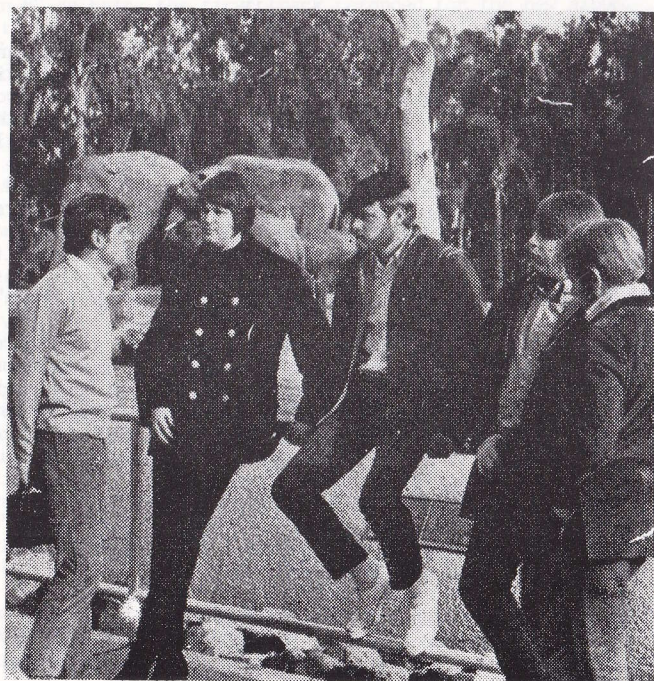
However, it is the music itself which is the most important factor - what is it that makes PET SOUNDS the way it is. Obviously Brian's songwriting techniques at that stage of his career is the first element; often a basic track would be recorded without his knowing what direction the melody would take but he had the "feel", the intuition upon which framework the finished song would take shape. He also had a formidable array of instruments at his disposal with which he could paint the most complex of musical vistas - conventional orchestral items, strings, brass, woodwind and timpani rub shoulders with electric and acoustic guitars, organ, glockenspiel, vibraphone, accordion, banjo, harmonica, harpsichord and piano all of which are kept in line by an astonishing number of percussion devices including yer everyday rock drum kit, tambourines, guiro, triangle, sleigh bells, claves, blocks and plastic water bottle (gasp). And can someone please tell me what makes the clip clop noise in "God Only Knows"?

Melody-wise Brian has never written better for, although many songs are steeped in melancholia this fact only serves to highlight the emotion that is so beautifully portrayed. Technically speaking the lead lines range high and low through the octaves - if you pick out the notes on a piano or guitar they do not dwell in one area of the scale for long but soar and weave with scant regard for key signature. A characteristic of this period is a little three note phrase that crops up time and again - Brian had used it before but it is especially noticeable throughout this album. It consists of a descending arpeggio found at the end of a phrase and usually spans two points of a triad e.g. "Where did your long hair go", "That's Not Me", "I can see so much in your eyes" etc; every song on PET SOUNDS written by Brian includes this figure with the exception of "God Only Knows".

Back-tracking to the percussion for a moment there is a strange contrast in evidence. For all the melodic invention and sophistication that may be found in many of the arrangements there is often a sense of simplicity, directness and even downright crudity



A well-earned break for the boys



In the local zoo



in the "hitting something" department. Listen to the downbeats on "Sloop John B", "Here Today" and "I'm Waiting For The Day" - often swamped in echo - then compare that with no drums at all on "You Still Believe In Me" (just a ting on a finger bell on every 2nd beat in the bar and brief timpani near the end) and a simple tambourine on "I Know There's An Answer" and "Caroline No" - plus the aforementioned water bottle of course. It is as if Brian threw out the rule book with sounds, moods and tempos (tempi?) changing at every turn.

Some of the music tracks themselves are nothing short of staggering - surf-in' music it ain't! No wonder the rest of the lads were er, um, cautious about this weird stuff their leader had been laying down in their absence. Moody string quartets, Latin American instrumentals, a bass harmonica pretending to be a saxophone - what next? Sometimes a track would be very sparse such as the greater part of "God Only Knows" but most would be complex with many instruments taking a melody all of their own but somehow blending in with the others so that only by careful listening can they be separated again. Take for example "Don't Talk" with its incredibly slow tempo; just a solitary cymbal beats the rhythm while the music consists of organ, what sounds like a string quartet (heavy on the cellos), flute, mandolin, an instrument I cannot identify which answers Brian's lines in the chorus and a lovely plump bass line which plods downstairs in a delightful way when he sings "... and listen to my heart beat". Or the fadeout to "Let's Go Away For A While" which starts with a woodwind section over strummed acoustic guitar, then three raps on snare drum followed by timpani, "eastern" flavour guitar a quick burst of pizzicato strings and slide guitar - all blended as a cohesive unit but fascinating if analysed as separate elements. This blend can be seen with the more conventional rock instrumentation on "Sloop John B" - overdubbed guitars playing double-tracked arpeggios soon joined by Carol Kaye's superb bass with glockenspiel tonking away to fill in the high frequencies. Brian has often used bass guitar and piano working as a team (a la P.Spector Esq.) and PET SOUNDS is no exception - listen to "Let's Go Away For A While" and the "clanky" sound they make together at the end of the verses in "Here Today".

The bass guitar frequently shines on its own too such as the high pitched, echoed example in "That's Not Me", the exquisite chromatic semiquaver run in "Here Today" (the bit that goes digadigadigadiga when Mike sings "You've got to keep in mind...") and the section that re-awakened my awareness of the album itself, the melodic figure behind the verse sections of "I Just Wasn't Made...".

I remarked earlier tonight to none other than my esteemed colleague and co-contributing editor AGD that a book could probably be written about this masterpiece of modern song-writing but, as we all know, it met with a comparatively lukewarm response from the record buying public - in the USA at any rate. It was Brian's peak but, in a way, his downfall as well. It found little favour with Capitol who, even as PET SOUNDS was still being recorded, were preparing THE BEST OF THE BEACH BOYS VOL I; perhaps, with a little more razzamataz from the powers that be it could have been a very different story. The album was recorded at a reported cost of \$70,000 but there was for Capitol, and the rest of the world, a bonus because it was during those sessions that another legend was born - "Good Vibrations". Indeed some feel it should have been included on PET SOUNDS itself, but that is another story.

Paul McCartney said, "The musical invention on that (album) is just amazing. When I heard it I thought, 'What the hell are we going to do?' My ideas took off from that standard." After he had heard it he was so inspired that the first thing our Paul did was to get together with John and write "Here, There and Everywhere" then, after a bit of thought they went and produced their own best ever LP - SGT PEPPER.

Mike Love in later years said he gave their album the title PET SOUNDS "... because it was our favourite music at the time" - perhaps forgetting his initial hostility (the rest of the group were just over-awed) and his referring to it as "Brian's ego music". Maybe in that latter description lies the real truth. In PET SOUNDS we have, after all, a supreme example of what may be achieved through a monumental exercise in self-indulgence. Perhaps NIGHT TIME will be Brian's second solo album.

CHRIS WHITE

Letters

Dear STOMP

Firstly I was surprised at your negative reaction to Brian's vocal on "Let's Go To Heaven In My Car". Although it's not much of an excuse to say his voice is improving little by little all the time when he was once capable of the exquisite beauty of "Don't Talk (Put Your Head On My Shoulder)", still "Let's Go To Heaven"'s lead vocal positively blows out of the water something like that on "I'm So Lonely" (which makes me cringe every time I hear it, especially since possessing the earlier version from "Ear Say", I know how good it could have been). No, you can't convince me that Brian's solo 45 A-side doesn't contain his best lead performance since probably "She's Got Rhythm". Nor can you convince me that there's any great difference between the single and soundtrack mixes, vocal-wise, anyway.

Secondly, to Richard Magee - who the hell are you to tell us what artists' career we should and shouldn't pursue - I hate to think it disturbs you that we all love Brian and The Beach Boys so much even in the '80's, that we may be considered fanatics. With all due respect to Simply Red and Level 42, as fine as their music may be, they hardly possess the legacy (musical and otherwise) that the BBs have stacked up in 25 years.

Thirdly, just a piece of information - in case you hadn't heard, the Beach Boys, according to VH-1 cable music network hear in the states, are planning to re-record the entire PET SOUNDS album with a full symphony orchestra and a rotation of guest vocalists (no word on what will become of the LP's two instrumentals). I will reserve comment on this particular artistic decision.

Lastly, I wouldn't mention this were it not for the fact that it looks like you guys will finally get to see your heroes on your own shores, but having been to five of their concerts since 1979, the thought of seeing them perform again in two weeks still manages to bring a smile to my face and a twinge of anticipation to my heart. In case you're wondering, Brian was with them that first time eight years ago, but not at the four subsequent concerts, nor was Dennis with them the two occasions I saw them before he died.

Well, I won't bore you guys any longer, but I would like to see a correction on my name, (AGD called me Gary when he credited me in his Sidemen update). Thanks and keep up the good work.

CRAIG SLOWINSKI

Dear STOMP

One thing I did realise when compiling my top ten list was just how good LA(Light Album) is. I could have included all the tracks bar HCIN, Sumahama and Shortenin' Bread. That album has definitely passed the test of time.

I would also like to back up the words of Nick Guy in the April issue. He obviously had the same feelings as I did when reading Les Chan's letter. For somebody that's never even had the chance to see the group in seven years (hopefully July should remedy that) the idea of us Brit's - and every other non American for that matter - being grateful that the group are doing 100 date tours of the states is just not on.

I know it's been said a million times before but thanks anyway for the effort you all put into the mag. Just a couple of suggestions, firstly is there any chance of cross-words reappearing, and secondly would it be an idea to organise some sort of get together on the 19th or before.

That's all for now.

GEOFF BAKER

P.S. I would reply to Richard Magee's letter but any reply would give his letter credibility.....

Dear STOMP

Regarding Richard Magee's letter (STOMP 60) there are a number of points he raised that require reply.

Firstly they have made a helluva lot of good music since 1967. Have you ever heard of SUNFLOWER for example? Sadly, a lot of the good stuff hasn't been released officially.

He calls us 'so-called' fans. We are more than that pal, most of us are devotees who care so much that the best ever fan mag is produced. I do agree it seems we're flogging a dead horse, they are no longer a force in the conventional sense, but this mag is our way of saying 'Thanks' (even if it does take nearly 100 issues).

Richard Magee, it seems, doesn't have a sense of fun. Most Beach Boys fans go to their shows because they do - they know they'll be entertained

In 25 years of listening to pop music I have never known the charts to be at a more all time low like today - typified by the amount of ancient songs at no. one this year.

One last point on a personal note - even Richard Magee mentioned PET SOUNDS, I have always found this album to be very overrated and MIU to be more pleasant to the ear. You at STOMP always seem to be very hard on this album.

Still it takes all sorts to make a world - eh Richard!

MARK STEPHENS

(It's interesting to note your comments about PET SOUNDS vs MIU, Mark but I think you will find few who will agree with you. Watch out for a forthcoming article (it may even be in this issue) on PET SOUNDS - Contributing Ed.)

Dear STOMP

I have subscribed to STOMP on and off since Issue 13 and no previous issue has driven me to write before, but after reading Mr Magee's letter I felt my opinion was as justified as his.

I was not old enough to remember the BB's when they made 'decent' music, in fact my first LPs were 20 GOLDEN GREATS, MIU and LOVE YOU. But until the release of MIU the Beach Boys were still regarded as a musical force of serious consideration. LOVE YOU garnered favourable reviews in all the rock press, HOLLAND was NME's LP of the year in '73, and whilst I agree that the subsequent years have seen a lack of direction and dearth of good material I take issue with the fact that they are viewed as a 'joke'.

I well remember "Live Aid", it was the Beach Boys not U2 or Dire Straits who stopped the guys working on site and brought a smile to their faces. If they do represent a joke it is only in the absurdity of singing a song so centred on California as "Surfin' USA" in order to ease famine in Africa.

Concert goers are a strange breed at best and totally baffling atworst. Didn't 90% of Jim Morrison's audience simply attend the 'event' in order to see whether or not he'd last the set without falling over? Jagger, Bowie and Turner are all older than Carl and yet they all still leap around like good 'uns. I happen to agree that Wilson Snr hasn't written anything 'great' since '67 but if "Too Much Sugar" is an indication of his new style then I will gladly remain a "zombie" and follow his work doggedly.

So, Mr Magee (or should it read Mr Magoo?) I do not need to find a new good band as the 'old horses' seem to have a few more miles in them yet.

JAMES CROWTHER

COMpetition

Most people are aware that Brian Wilson was well satisfied with PET SOUNDS. No surprise, therefore, to hear him say of one particular track that it was "the most satisfying piece of music I've ever made." He goes on, "I applied a certain set of dynamics through the arrangement and the mixing and got a full musical extension of what I'd planned during the earliest stages of the theme. I think the chord changes are very special. I used a lot of musicians on the track - twelve violins, piano, four saxes, oboe, vibes and a guitar with a coke bottle on the strings for a semi-steel guitar effect. Also I used two basses and percussion." What may come as a surprise, however, is that the track in question is "Let's Go Away For Awhile". Indeed, some may view it simply as an instrumental "filler" (such as abounded on early albums) but Tony Asher did write lyrics for the song and it is probable that Brian wrote a melody, though even this fact is not certain. What is certain is that we are unlikely ever to hear the song as it was originally planned - and this is where you come in.

THIS IS WHAT YOU DO

We would like you to write your own melody and lyrics using "Let's Go Away For Awhile" as a backing track and either sing it yourself or, if you wish, get someone to do the vocals for you. They could also help with any harmonies you may want to use. We do not want you to write any music out (other than for your own benefit), we just want you to send in a cassette (normal speed please) with the completed song on it. You will probably also find it useful to make a cassette copy of the track so that you don't wear out your original LP whilst you are working on the song.

NOTE:

- 1) You do not necessarily need any fancy recording equipment to enter the competition. All you need do is play the track from a record player or hi-fi system and sing with it into a cassette recorder.
- 2) Those with more sophisticated recording gear may use it for over-dubbing but DO NOT ADD ANY FURTHER INSTRUMENTATION. We must assume the "backing track" is complete and as Brian wished it to be.
- 3) The song will be judged by how well it blends lyrically and melodically with the rest of the PET SOUNDS album and not necessarily on vocal performance.
- 4) Judging will be carried out by various members of the STOMP team but DO NOT send your entries to Mike Grant but to me, Chris White, at the address below.
- 5) Please send your entries to reach me no later than 22nd August.

The winner will be announced and the winning song played at this year's Convention along with any others we feel merit a public airing. A suitable prize will also be awarded. (Sorry, not a recording contract!)

I know there is a wealth of talent among STOMP readers (I have already heard examples of it) so don't be shy, have a go. Send your cassettes to: Chris White, 29 Truleigh Road, Upper Beeding, Steyning, West Sussex, BN4 3JR.

CHRIS WHITE



Bouncing Back. Beach Boy Brian Wilson, seated, meets with Tom Hulett in Los Angeles to sign a new personal management contract.



Voodoo Children Meet Beach Boy. Brian Wilson, at left, views the video in which he stars with I.R.S. Records act Wall Of Voodoo. The clip is set to the Jackie Wilson classic "Do It Again." With Wilson at the premiere party in Los Angeles are brothers Bruce (right) and Mark Moreland (second from right). The clip's director is Stephen Sayadian.

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'LOOK OUT FOR
 NEW SINGLE
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GILSEA PARK

'BACK IN '65'

THE SOUNDS OF SUMMER

18

NEWS NEWS NEWS

The boys have added a further date to their European mini-tour, thus the complete
 schedule now reads as follows:

July 19th	-	Wembley Arena, England
July 21st	-	Knokke, Belgium
July 22nd	-	Bad Segerberg, West Germany
July 23rd	-	Nyon, Switzerland

As of writing, the gigs are still taking place (remember 1977, with the tickets going on
 sale one week and the tour being cancelled about three weeks later? Hence the guarded
 sarcasm...), so any reviews - especially from the continental shows - would be appreciated.
 As soon as they're done over here, it's back home to earn some real bucks.

The BB/Fat Boys collaboration "Wipeout" is out on the Fat Boys' new album and is
 dissected elsewhere in this issue. However, the Beach Boys have pulled out of the "Back
 To The Beach" movie also mentioned last time round... and finally on the movie sound-
 track front, the status of "Let's Go To Heaven etc" in "Police Academy 4" is fleeting, to
 say the least - a rough timing came out at about 45 seconds, and neither Brian nor Landy
 are reportedly best pleased.

Despite Gary Usher's withdrawal from Brian's solo project, the LP still crawls slowly
 towards a tentative autumn release (autumn 1987, one hopes...). Brian is now the
 exclusive producer, and has recruited two new sidemen, Andy Paley & Michael Bernard.
 There was a notion to come over to the UK a few weeks prior to the Wembley gig and cut
 some tracks, but the plan was dropped in favour of recording in New York. Neither Brian's
 45 nor the "PA4" soundtrack LP has dipped so much as a toe in the Billboard charts:
 nonetheless, Brian's signed with Sire Records for a 2-album deal. He's also signed a
 new personal management contract with Tom Hu lett, whose Concerts West have managed the
 Beach Boys since the late '70s.

It appears that at long last, the band have finally gained control over their entire
 back catalogue, thus depriving Capitol of the stuff that sells. This came to light when
 EMI proffered the notion of a CD of 20 GOLDEN GREATS to tie in with the UK show. According
 to someone on the inside, this means an end to "shoddy unofficial compilations."
 Does this mean that all future shoddy compilations are now officially tacky?

Brian on video, part 42: the Man Himself contributes a cameo to the promo for Wall Of
 Voodoo's latest 45, a reworking of "Do It Again". The film is intriguingly described as
 "Wilson's beach nightmare..." Two other videos worth a mention are the Deja View collection
 - containing Brian's 1980s vid of the 1960 track - to be found most anywhere for £6.99,
 and another collection which includes one of the two promos shot in Brighton in 1972 for
 "You Need A Mess Of Help..." and "Don't Go Near The Water". Further details are lacking
 as we've lost the bit of paper. (See P. Moore letter on page 5)

Brian aside, recording news is thin on the ground (logical, as the band are touring fit
 to drop), but reported as upcoming is BB involvement on a new Everley Brothers LP on
 Polygram - on "Don't Worry Baby" - and Carl's possible vocal support on Roger McGuinn's
 next LP, to be produced by Terry Melcher.

Clanger corner: The Cally Boys 12" mentioned last issue uses clips of the David Lee Roth
 version of "California Girls", and not the original, as stated. This is purely a public
 service announcement as you wouldn't want to hear it anyway. Appalling cacophany.

Very sad to hear news of the death of Curt Bøettcher (aka Becher) who died on
 the 14th of June after a short illness. Curt worked with Bruce Johnston
 many times, co-produced 'Here Comes The Night' on the LA (Light Album).
 Produced Mike's 'Looking Back With Love' LP, and sang backing vocals on
 numerous records. Curt's Biggest success was as producer of the Association's
 1966 number 1 'Cherish'. Full obituary next issue.

AGD & MIKE

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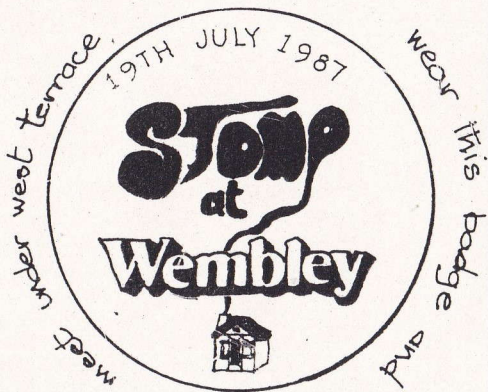


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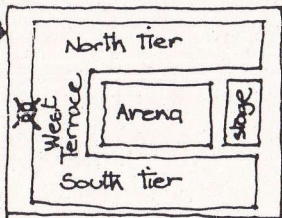
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